




Cultivating Mindfulness Based Emotional Composure


Sharing with Bro. Billy Tan

Explore how to apply cognitive psychology and mindfulness techniques to tame emotional excitement and cultivate mindfulness based stress reduction and emotional composure for a happier and more peaceful life.

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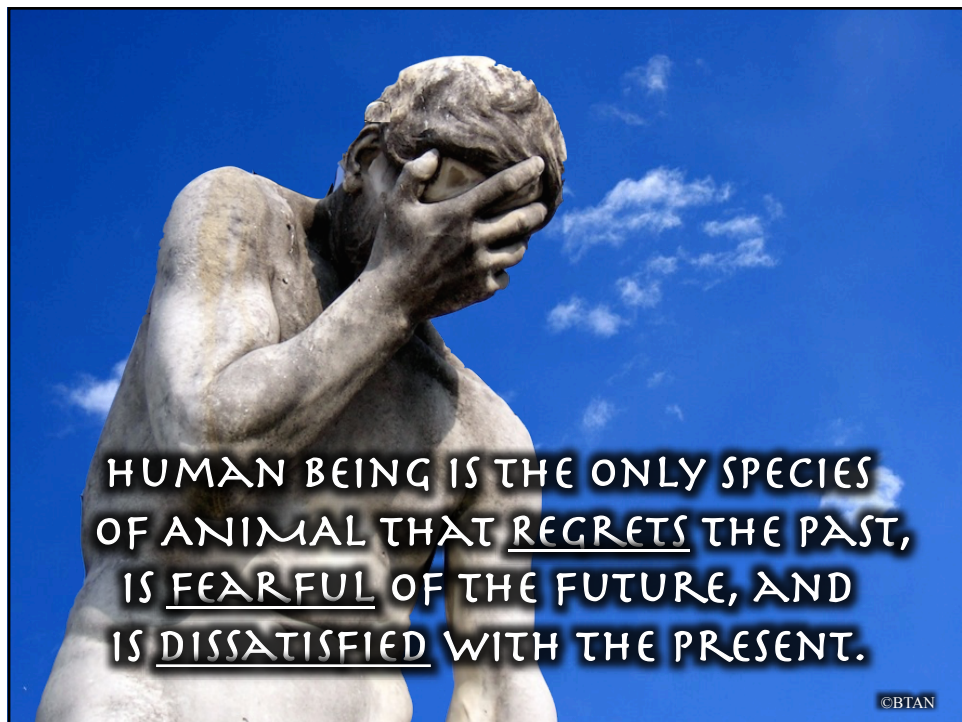
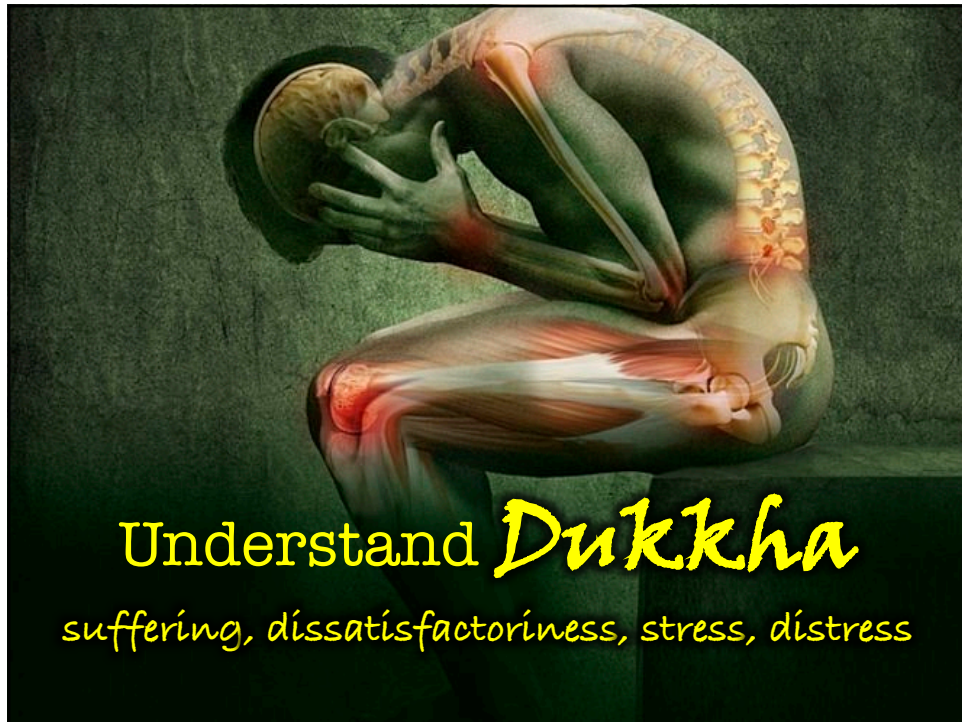
SYNOPSIS



Explore teachings of the Buddha from a scientific perspective:

- ⌘ Understand how emotions are aroused;
- ⌘ Realize how emotional excitement leads to dissatisfactoriness in life or “suffering” (*dukkha*);
- ⌘ Recognize how we easily fall into thinking traps (*cognitive distortions*) making us self-centered;
- ⌘ Learn to apply the four focuses of introspection (*satipaṭṭhāna*) to calm emotions, overcome self-centeredness, and cultivate wholesome volitions;
- ⌘ Manifest a more peaceful and harmonious life.

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Mind As An Activity

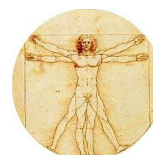


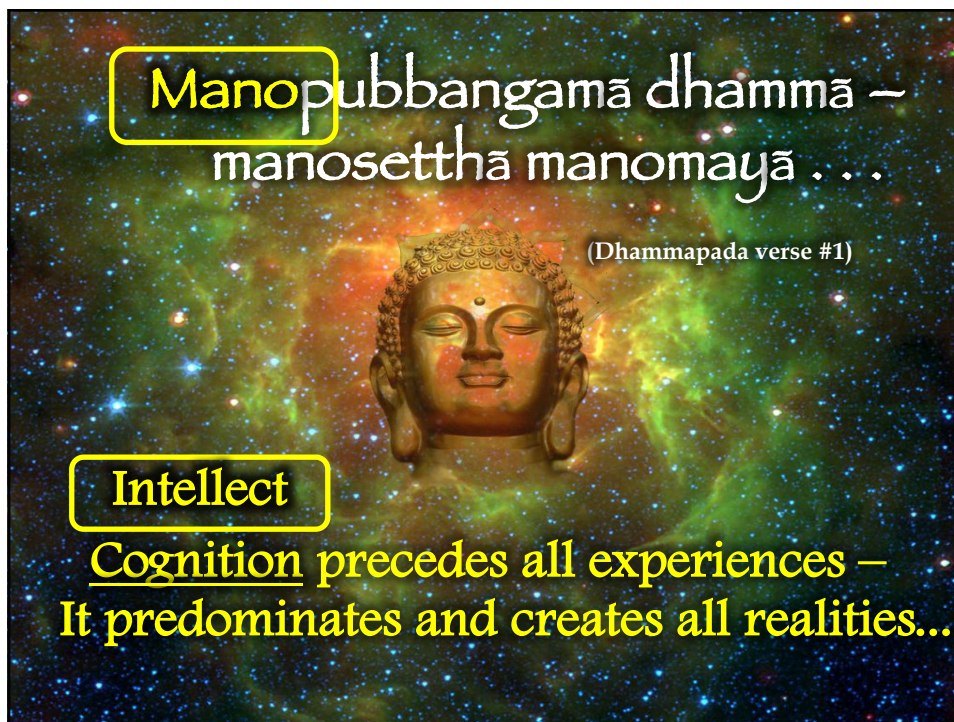
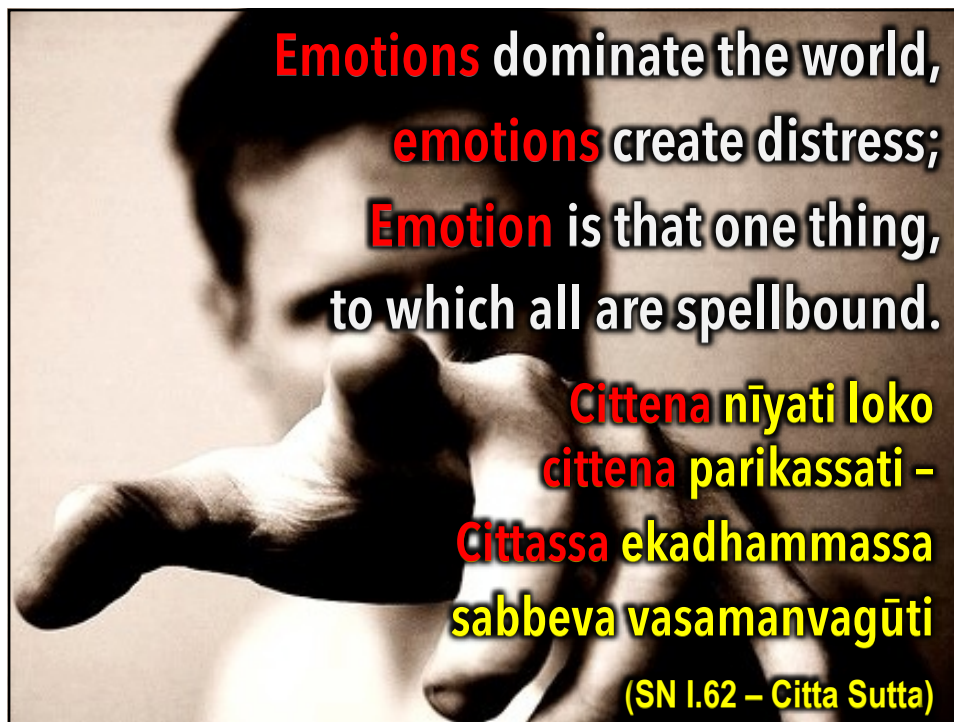
MENTAL EXPERIENCE

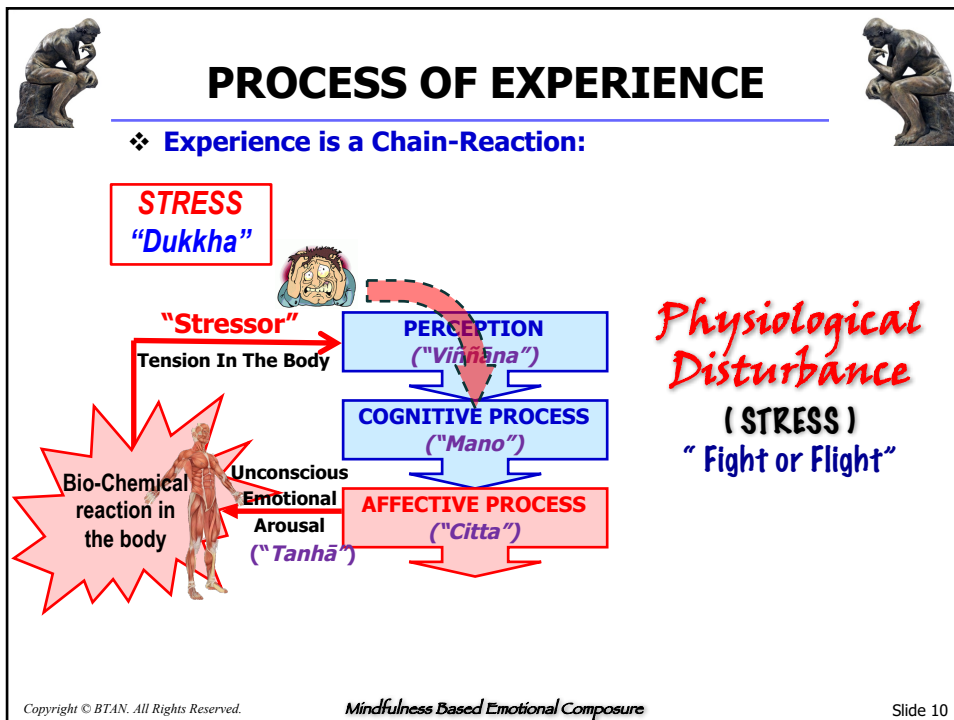
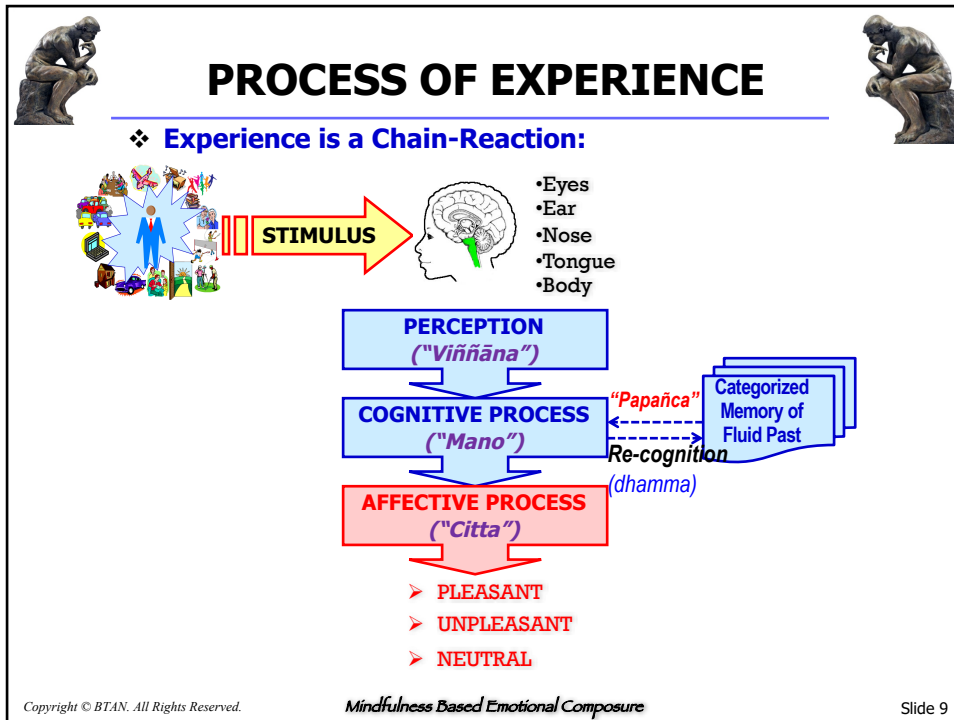


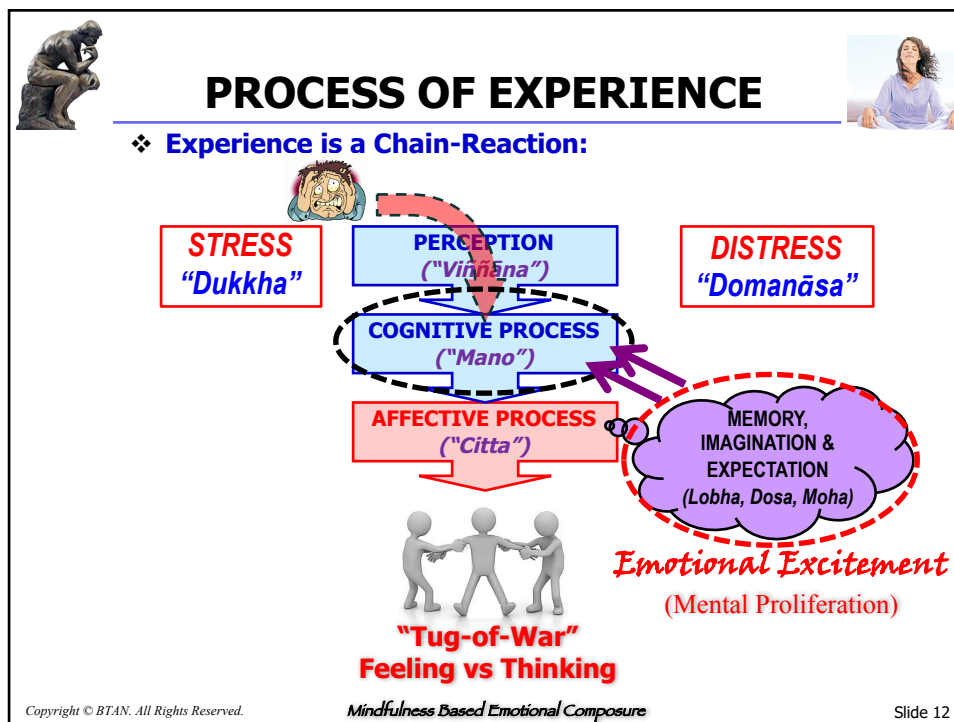
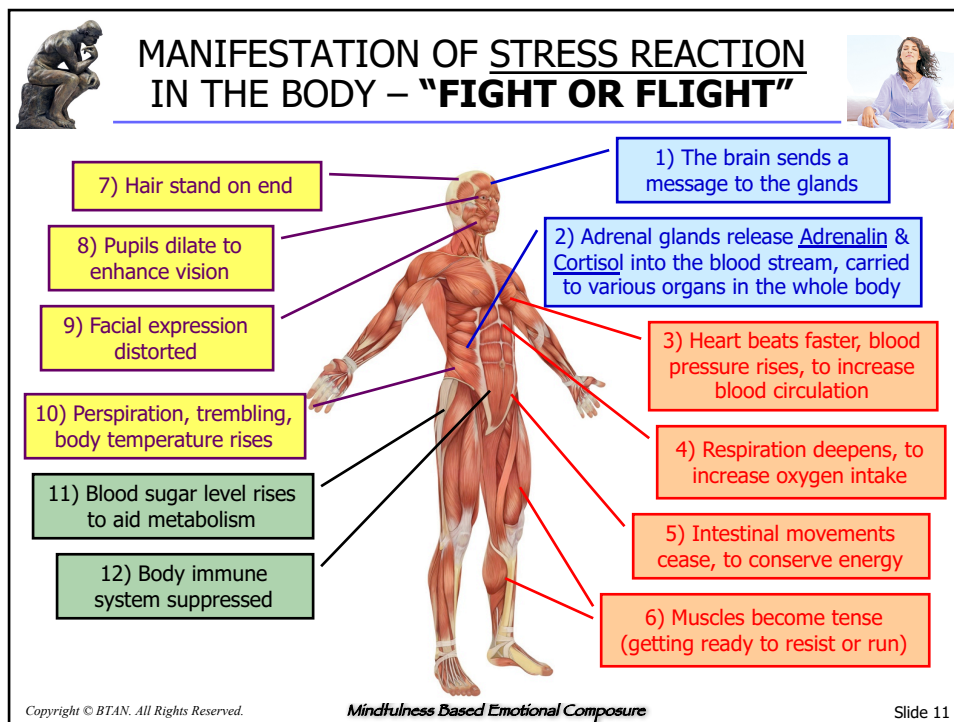
THREE PARTS OF MENTAL EXPERIENCE:

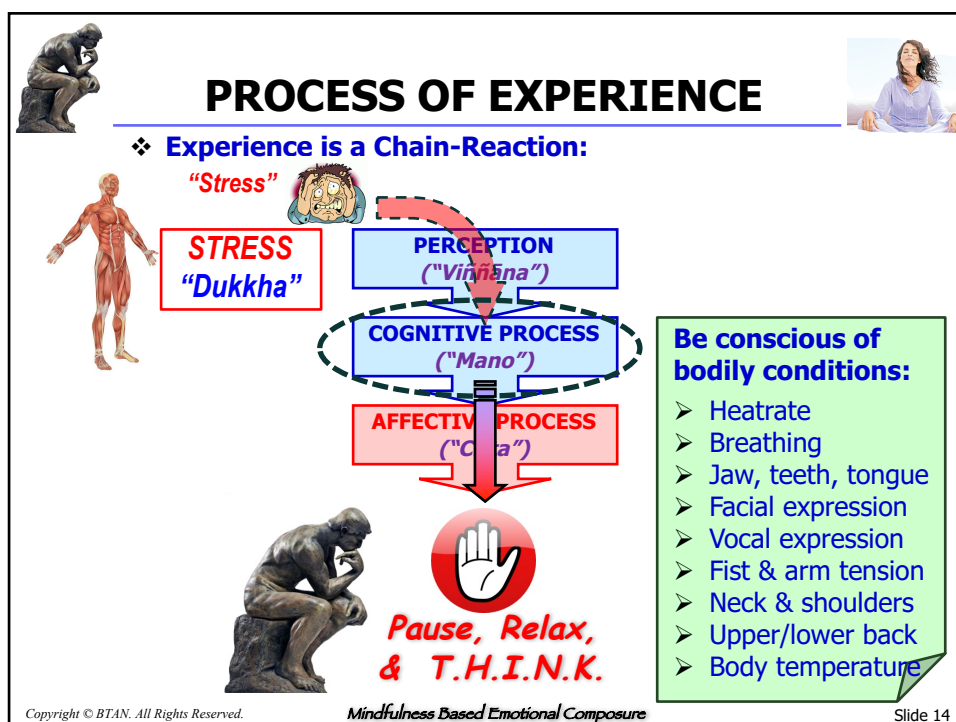
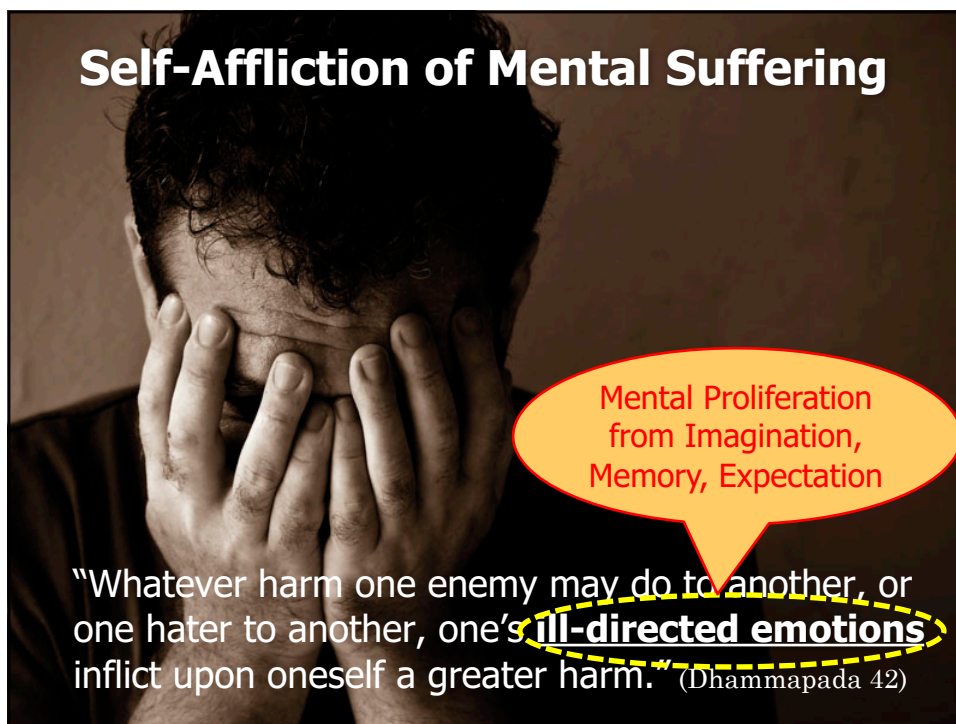
- **Viññāna** : Process of Perception ("perception")
 - what is perceived through the sense organs;
- **Mano** : Cognitive Process ("conception & intellect")
 - categorized interpretation of perception giving meaning to what was perceived;
- **Citta** : Affective Process ("emotion")
 - pleasant & unpleasant feelings arouse the emotions, leading to emotional excitement and reactions;
 - personalizing the experience with the notion there is a "self" to be affected.















3-STEP SELF-COMPASSION

 ❖ **PAUSE**
(allow time for emotional excitement & anxiety to calm down and hormonal reactions to subside)

 ❖ **RELAX**
(take deep breaths, relax the body, and consciously compose the mind to respond)

 ❖ **T.H.I.N.K.**
(purposefully focus on wholesome & beneficial response to the problem)

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BENEFITS OF BREATHING

Most critically overlooked relaxation tool!


The fastest way to relax the body & calm the mind.

- a) Increases natural unforced oxygen intake (food for cells!);
- b) Stabilizes heart rate and blood pressure;
- c) Regulates body temperature and blood circulation;
- d) Restores and maintains homeostasis (stability);
- e) Calms the Amygdala, fear control center in the brain, by indicating the absence of threats.

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FREEDOM FROM MENTAL PROLIFERATION



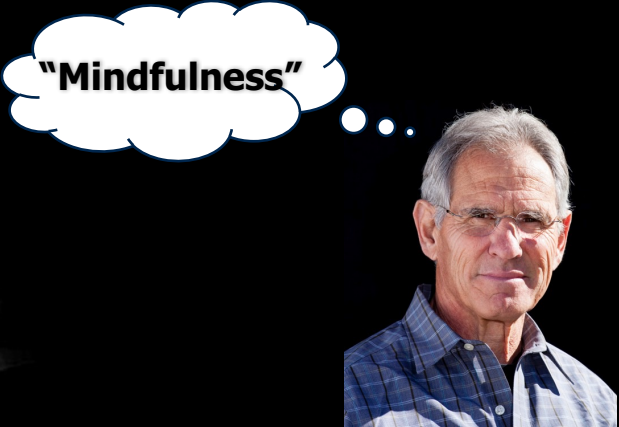

1. RELAX THE BODY: *Conscious Relaxation*
 - Bio-chemical activities gradually subside;
 - Tension in the body eases;
 - Mind no longer disturbed by tension in the body.

A relaxed body is a necessary condition for a calm mind!
2. CALM THE MIND: *Introspective Attention*
 - Relaxed body suggests absence of threats;
 - Conscious focused attention on the present moment;
 - No mental proliferation – mind calms down;
 - No further arousal of bio-chemical reactions.

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SATIPATṬHĀNA

as a Psychotherapy





"Mindfulness"

“SATIPAṬṬHĀNA”
Introspection

- ✧ **sati = attention**
- ✧ **upa = within**
- ✧ **thāna = to place**

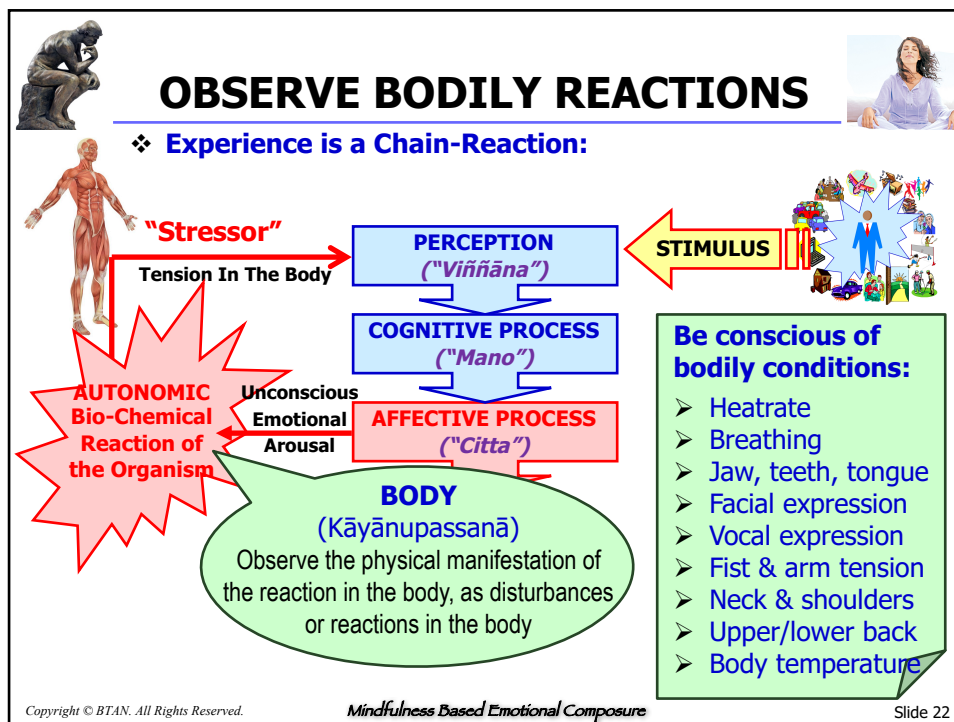
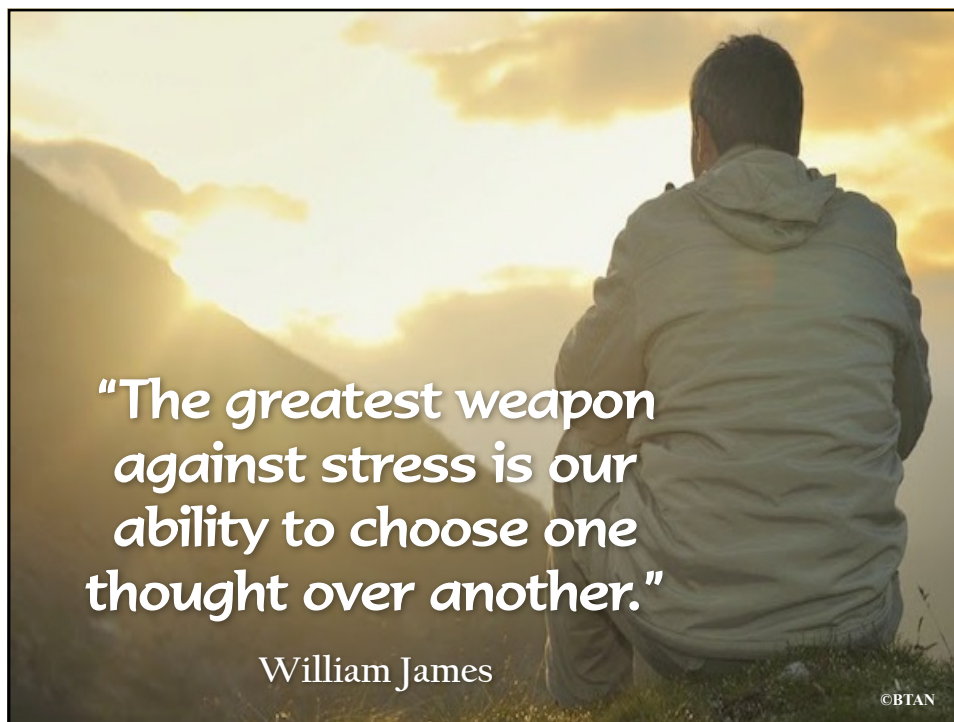
To place attention within

 **INTROSPECTION** 
“Satipaṭṭhāna”

FOUR FOCUSES OF INSTROSPECTION

- ① **BODY** (*Kāyānupassanā*): Observe the physical manifestation of the reactions in the body;
- ② **FEELING** (*Vedanānupassanā*): Observe the manifestation of feeling of sensations in the body (pleasant, unpleasant);
- ③ **AFFECTION** (*Cittānupassanā*): Observe the manifestation of emotional excitement and arousal of emotional states;
- ④ **CONCEPTION** (*Dhammānupassanā*): Observe manifestation of thoughts and concepts, the interpretation of circumstances past, present, and future.

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OBSERVE BODILY REACTIONS

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

"Stressor"
Tension In The Body

PERCEPTION
("Vināna")

COGNITIVE PROCESS
("Mano")

AFFECTIVE PROCESS
("Citta")

FEELING
(Vedanānupassanā)
Observe the manifestation of feelings of sensations in the body (pleasant, unpleasant), in terms of pain, pleasure, agitation, calm, discomfort, comfort;

AUTONOMIC Bio-Chemical Reaction of the Organism
Unconscious Emotional Arousal

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OBSERVE THE AFFECTION

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

STRESS
"Dukkha"

PERCEPTION
("Vināna")

COGNITIVE PROCESS
("Mano")

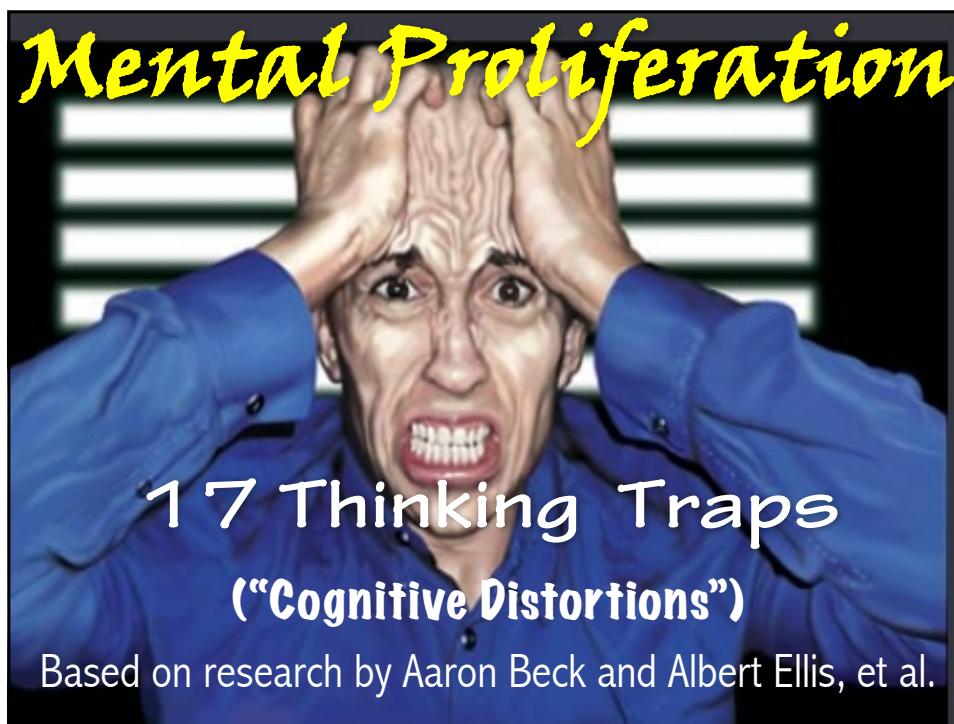

AFFECTIVE PROCESS
("Citta")

AFFECTION
(Cittānupassanā)
Observe the manifestation of emotional excitement and arousal of emotional states such as fear, anger, anxiety, lust, hatred, grief, sorrow, despair, etc.


EMOTIONAL EXCITEMENT
(Mental Proliferation)
MEMORY, IMAGINATION & EXPECTATION (Lobha, Dosa, Moha)

DISTRESS
"Domanāsa"

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COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS #1 - #6




Category	Description
1) Mind Reading	Imagining what others are thinking about you or your circumstances without clarifying
2) Fortune Telling	Predicting the future adversely
3) Labeling/Generalization	Making sweeping assumptions or statements without supporting evidence
4) Discounting Positives	Minimizing or ignoring all positive aspects, leaving inadequacy and hopelessness
5) Negative Filtering	Focusing and amplifying only negative aspects excluding any positive opportunities
6) Black or White / Dichotomous Thinking	Extremist view of all or nothing, no grey areas or compromise, "always" or "never"

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COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS #7 - #12




Category	Description
7) Perfectionist/"Should"	Expecting things to be ideal or perfect
8) Righteousness	Prioritizing truth, ethics and moral standards over human considerations
9) Magnification / Catastrophizing	Over-emphasis on specific details, blown out of proportion, worrying too much
10) Minimization	Overlooking / shrinking important issues or necessary considerations
11) Unfair Comparison	Negatively comparing with others successes
12) What If?	Over-intellectualizing or over-extended imagination of snowball effects

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COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS #13 - #17




Category	Description
13) Blame Game / Finger Pointing	Finding faults in others or blaming others
14) Shame / Guilt / Personalizing	Finding faults in oneself or blaming oneself
15) Emotional Reasoning	Letting feelings alone guide your viewpoint or conclusions
16) Believing is seeing	Rejecting evidence that contradicts your beliefs, superstitions, or expectations
17) Past Orientation	Letting past experiences dictate all decision making about the future ("living in the past")

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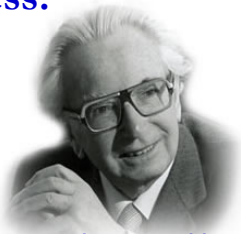


Our Response Is Our Choice In Life



- **RESPONSIBILITY = Response Ability, Our Ability To Respond.**

“ Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space lies the freedom and our power to choose our response. In those choices lie our growth and our happiness. ”



Viktor Frankl

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T.H.I.N.K. before you act or speak

 T	Is it Truthful		
H	Is this Helpful		
I	Will it Improve the situation		
 N	Is this really Necessary		
K	Is it a Kind act or speech		

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OBSERVE THE CONCEPTION

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

PERCEPTION ("Viññāna")

COGNITIVE PROCESS ("Mano")

AFFECTIVE PROCESS ("Citta")

DISTRESS "Domanāsa"

CONCEPTION (Dhammānupassanā)
Observe the manifestation of thoughts and concepts, the interpretation of circumstances past, present, and future

EMOTIONAL EXCITEMENT (Mental Proliferation)
MEMORY, IMAGINATION & EXPECTATION (Lobha, Dosa, Moha)

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OBSERVE THE CONCEPTION

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

PERCEPTION ("Viññāna")

COGNITIVE PROCESS ("Mano")

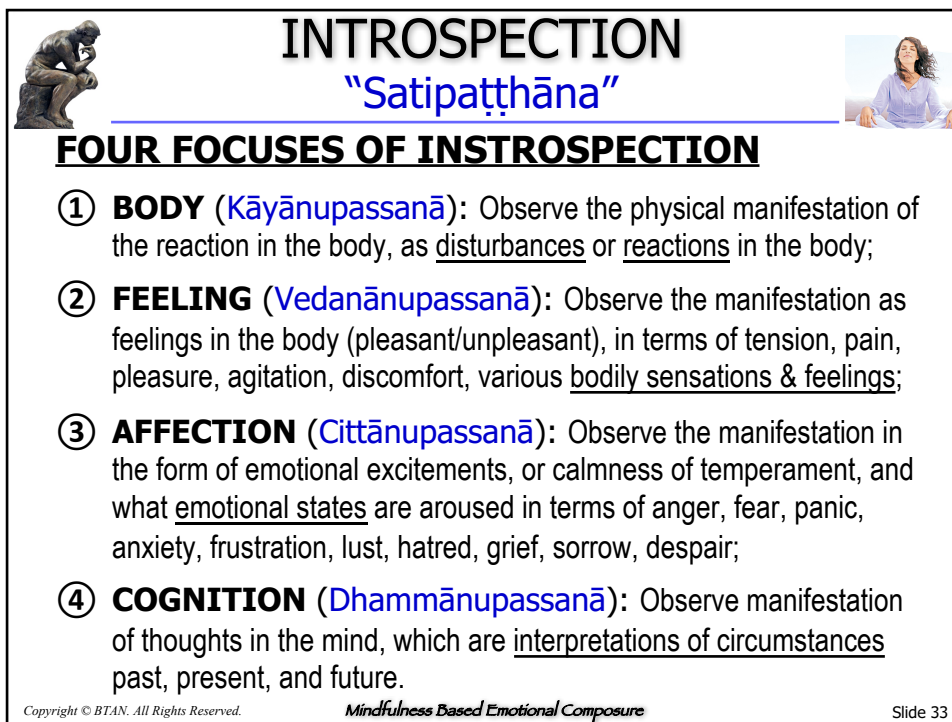
AFFECTIVE PROCESS ("Citta")

DISTRESS "Domanāsa"

CONCEPTION (Dhammānupassanā)
Observe the manifestation of thoughts and concepts, the interpretation of circumstances past, present, and future

EMOTIONAL EXCITEMENT (Mental Proliferation)
MEMORY, IMAGINATION & EXPECTATION (Lobha, Dosa, Moha)

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INTROSPECTION

"Satipatthana"

FOUR FOCUSES OF INSTROSPECTION


- ① **BODY** (*Kāyānupassanā*): Observe the physical manifestation of the reaction in the body, as disturbances or reactions in the body;
- ② **FEELING** (*Vedanānupassanā*): Observe the manifestation as feelings in the body (pleasant/unpleasant), in terms of tension, pain, pleasure, agitation, discomfort, various bodily sensations & feelings;
- ③ **AFFECTION** (*Cittānupassanā*): Observe the manifestation in the form of emotional excitements, or calmness of temperament, and what emotional states are aroused in terms of anger, fear, panic, anxiety, frustration, lust, hatred, grief, sorrow, despair;
- ④ **COGNITION** (*Dhammānupassanā*): Observe manifestation of thoughts in the mind, which are interpretations of circumstances past, present, and future.

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Discern Your Thoughts:

"Positive" vs "Negative" Thoughts



DISCERN YOUR THOUGHTS



Discern & Differentiate your thoughts.

POSITIVE THOUGHTS:

- I. Wholesome** – free of evil or malicious intent;
- II. Blameless** – when manifested does not cause strife or suffering to others;
- III. Resourceful** – when developed and undertaken leads to wellness, peace, and happiness to self and others;
- IV. Exemplary – praised and practiced by the wise** – people whose lives are clearly wholesome, blameless, and resourceful.


– Adapted from the Kalama Sutta AN.3.65

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Three things lead to happiness...
Forgiveness of the past,
Gratitude in the present,
Kindness towards the future.

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CONCLUSION



- ⌘ Emotional excitement gives rise to mental proliferation and cognitive distortions;
- ⌘ Imagination, Memory, and Expectations ("*I.ME*" *syndrome*) lead to self-centeredness;
- ⌘ Apply four focuses of introspection (*satipaṭṭhāna*) to overcome self-centered emotions, cultivate wholesome volitions, and skillful actions;
- ⌘ Practice: Pause, Relax, T.H.I.N.K.;
- ⌘ Apply mindfulness in daily life as a therapeutic solution for a more peaceful and harmonious life.

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Metta



**Send love when we see hatred,
forgiveness when we see resentment,
strength when we see weakness,
tranquility when we see chaos,
peace when we see hostility,
courage when we see fear,
hope when we see despair,
comfort when we see pain,
kindness when we see cruelty,
compassion when we see suffering.**

*May suffering ones be suffering free, the fear-struck fearless be;
May grieving ones shed all grief, may all beings find peace & relief.*